

News From



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HELEN K. LORING CHOSEN
LEISURE WORLDER FOR SEPTEMBER

Helen K. Loring, chosen as Leisure Worlder of the Month for September, is dedicated to exploding the mythology of aging, and she's doing it with verve, quick wit, gusto, a vitality that is contagious and a sparkling awareness of the good things in life. She shares these lovely qualities with others in a myriad of ways.

An original oil portrait of Mrs. Loring has been commissioned and will be hung in the main rotunda of the sales pavilion during September. At the end of the month it will be presented to her at an informal ceremony.

A liberated woman in its sane and sensible connotation, Mrs. Loring strives to help others obtain their liberation from the stereotype version of the homemaker, wife and mother by enabling them to establish, through counselling, a good sense of self. "Women are brainwashed from the time they are very little," she said. "Many feel their success in life is achieved through the

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development of others. They speak of the success of their children and of their husbands, but rarely does anyone say, "I, too, am a person, a worthy person and let's meet on that ground'."

To this end she does volunteer counseling at the Women's Opportunity Center of the University of California Irvine Campus. Her course, entitled "The Joy of Living" given as her contribution to Hadassah women is already over-subscribed for the Fall session and may require two classes to accommodate all the women and men who are seeking enrichment in the quality of life here. In this course women can learn how to live life more fully in a single or partnership state.

Retirement? The word is no part of Mrs. Loring's vocabulary. "I have fought and hassled with it," she stated. "I don't like the word and so I've changed it to 'advancement'. To me, life is a 'becoming' and I'm not retiring from anything. This was a commitment she made when she and her attorney husband, S. Jerome Loring came to Leisure World to seek a new way of life in the maturing years.

Mrs. Loring was Associate Professor in the Graduate School of Education at C. W. Post College of Long Island University where she trained counsellors. She has a Bachelor of Arts Degree from Hunter College, a Masters Degree from City University of New York and doctoral matriculation at New York University with special study and training at Vassar College, the New School for Social Research and the Center for the Study of the Person.

A former guidance director in the Syosset, New York school system, Mrs. Loring has also been a speech therapist and has taught English and the Speech Arts in the secondary schools. Interspersed with all of this was a second career in writing, acting, producing for the theatre, in community theatre, summer stock and as a free-lance writer on radio and television.

Abounding with a zest for living and an overflow of energies she is naturally enthusiastic about her activities in Leisure World. She lectures for several organizations discussing subjects that range from "Self-Knowledge--Evolving a Personal Philosophy" to a memory training course presented through the Sunday Discussion Club. She has also given a course entitled, "Living in Conflict and Harmony" at the Israel Academy of Irvine and is a panelist in the all-day conference, "A Day for Women" held in Newport Beach. She has already accumulated credits from the five extension courses she has taken and is happily involved with folk dancing, oil painting, design and mosaics.

With all this mental activity, Mrs. Loring does not neglect the physical aspect of her life. "It's important to love your body," she contends. "To keep your mind alive, your body has to be kept alive, too." And to achieve this sense of balance, she indulges in strenuous exercises in the gym each week and has improved her swimming skills with lessons from a Leisure World life-guard, and is the proud possessor of a team trophy in table tennis.

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A personal philosophy supports and gives momentum to the whirlwind life she enjoys. "I look upon each opportunity - each day, as an enrichment for myself, a chance to grow." she stated and bases these sentiments on three things.

The first is to do something for yourself each day. "Here at Leisure World we have a chance to try something new, something we've dreamed about doing but never before had the time to do," she said. For Helen Loring it has been oil painting and for her husband, Sam, it is the stimulating challenge of ceramic casting. "No one is going to judge you," she added. "No one is going to give you a report card, and best of all you are not in competition with anyone. Every day, or in every space of time, do something for yourself."

Secondly, do something for other people. "It gives one's life a new dimension," she said.

Thirdly, she believes strongly in the development of fantasies such as the one she cherishes to devote her time to writing.

Because of a universal thought that loss of memory comes with aging, she and her husband went to the California Center for training in relaxation, hypnosis, bio-feedback and other subjects and then brought back to Leisure World the young man who did the teaching. He now gives a course in Relaxation and Autogenic Training every Thursday morning under the sponsorship of the Education and Recreation Department.

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"Many people cannot get out to the universities, so I try to bring what I learn back here to Leisure World, " she stated.

"There is so much developing in the fields of mind control, control of disease, control of the forces within us, and the control of stress, to which we are all subjected." The way to control stress, Mrs. Loring believes is to recognize what it is and what it is doing to you and to work at counteracting it. "It's important to take charge of yourself more than most of us do," she said. "This, in itself, is a form of reaching out"

On aging, she says, "people past 50 have to begin to look at themselves as viable, creative, capable of in-put into this world of ours. Society needs the collective wisdom of people. They have to fight the mythology of aging and begin to believe they have something to contribute." To those who feel they have contributed enough at this stage in their lives and who want to spend their time in pleasurable pursuits, she has this to say. "If this is their only purpose, then life becomes a process of just passing time. For me, at this stage, living has many other dimensions still to be explored."

In her den Mrs. Loring has files of plots, of first drafts and plans for continuing the work she has done in the past -- writing for the theatre in particular. It's here, she believes, that it will all come together. "It's a natural expression for me and drama is the way to do it."

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She is considering the possibility of obtaining her California license for psychological counselling with perhaps an office here in Leisure World to deal with marriage and family problems, but as yet it is still unresolved in her mind.

And after that? There will be travel which the Loring both love. Their home is filled with treasures of other places and other times. There will be new challenges, as yet unknown, but one thing is certain. For Helen Loring there will always be a wider horizon to conquer!

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